1561

Liberty

NOT THE DAUGHTER BUT THE MOTHER OF ORDER — PROUDHON

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"For always in thine eyes, O Liberty!
Shines that high light whereby the world is saved;
And though thou slay us, we will trust in thee."

JOHN HAY.

On Picket Duty.

Herbert Spencer, being asked recently by a French newspaper to give his opinion of M. Renan, declined on the ground that he had never opened one of M. Renan's books. Since when has Mr. Spencer been so scrupulous? He has never read any of Proudhon's works, yet he does not hesitate to criticise Proudhon and condemn him as glibly as if he knew his works from A to Z.

As I expected, the Democrats carried the country. It is a good thing that they have carried it so thoroughly. There can be no dodging of responsibility now. There is no longer a Republican Senate to block the wheels of legislation. The Democrats for the next four years can do what they please, and we shall see what it pleases them to do. Undoubtedly they will wipe out every vestige of Federal interference with elections. On that issue the party is harmonious. But all the free trade we shall get will be the reduction of a few duties here, the increase of a few there, and a slight lengthening of the free list. And as for free banking, while there may be a bold man or two who will insist on broaching the subject in Congress, it is my belief that the party is so thoroughly scared on the subject that it will overwhelmingly vote down any repeal bill that may be introduced. It is to be noticed, by the way, that George Fred Williams and the other free banking representatives from Massachusetts are elected to stay at home.

An Apology.

Mr. Tucker declares that, in my article in Liberty, No. 239, I have misrepresented my friends, the Anarchists; and that he is chagrined at learning that my long acquaintance with Liberty has failed to inform me as to what Anarchism is. I am surprised and gratified at his appreciation of my ideas; and I am as deeply chagrined as he is that I have been, all these years, advocating Anarchism without knowing it. I see no need, however, of his chagrin. He is in no way responsible for my stupidity. Anarchism, if true, will survive without my aid; and if the compliment he has paid me be deserved, I must have been doing some good, though I have not adopted his banner.

But I acknowledge that I owe him and his readers an apology. I did honestly suppose that Anarchism had come to mean Equal Freedom. It is true, Mr. Tucker and one Tak Kak, whoever he may be, did, heretofore, advocate very nearly the same views that are set forth in my article; but they labeled them Egoism, and I have nowhere seen it stated that Egoism and Anarchism are one. Tak Kak virtually retracted these doctrines when he avowed that he had nothing but contempt for anyone who should stop to consider whether a proposed act or course of conduct were expedient or not. I have not his words before me, but I think I have given the substance of them. As for Mr. Tucker, I still think his manner of using the phrase Equal Freedom justifies the inference that he regards it as expressive of the same idea as Anarchism.

With these two possible exceptions all the Anarchistic writers in Liberty and other radical journals, so far as I remember, have used the two expressions as synonymous. In this I am corroborated by the fact that, whenever I have obtained a hearing in any one of these journals, I have been met by a storm of disapproval, like the stirring up of a hornet's nest; and not an Anarchist has ever yet offered me the least shadow of support. But I am happy, at last, to find myself in so much good company, — happy to find myself so grossly misinformed as to the real meaning of a word about which there has been, undeniably, much misunderstanding.

But if I am a good, orthodox Anarchist, what shall we call Stephen Pearl Andrews, Josiah Warren, Herbert Spencer, and all those who are bent on dishing out freedom to all in equal measure? Is equal freedom only a conventional device, after all? Do Anarchists agree that equal freedom is subsidiary, and not fundamental? Let us have this question settled so clearly that there need be no disagreement hereafter.

A. WARREN.

THORNBERRY, CLAY CO., TEXAS.

[Again I complain that Mr. Warren has read Liberty with insufficient care. Tak Kak and I are not exceptions among those who write for Liberty. Nearly all the writers for Liberty accept and advocate the views urged by Tak Kak and myself regarding Egoism, Anarchism, and equal freedom. There are one or two who do not, but these, not Tak Kak and myself, are the exceptions. It is not true, either, that Tak Kak ever retracted these views, virtually or otherwise. Mr. Warren misquotes him. He never said, either in words or in substance, what Mr. Warren attributes to him. What he did say may be found in No. 112 of Liberty. For it he was taken to task, and in No. 115 he explained what he did say. He showed that the statement complained of was in perfect accord with the doctrine of Egoism. Mr. Warren has not seen it stated in Liberty that Egoism and Anarchism are one, for the very good reason that such a statement would not be true. It is true, however, that there is no inconsistency between the two, and that most Anarchists are Egoists. It is not improper, either, to speak of Anarchy and equal freedom as synonymous, as each is expressive of a condition excluding coercion of the non-invasive individual. Mr. Warren should strive to get it into his head that an Anarchist is one who disbelieves in such coercion. But most Anarchists disbelieve in it, not as a matter of political and social expediency, but as a matter of ethical obligation. These are Egoistic Anarchists. They do not deny the right to invade, but they think it is better not to invade or be invaded. They think that in an ideal society no one will desire to invade. But, before the ideal society arrives, they expect to secure an Anarchistic society by a combination of the non-invasive to resist invasion. The ideal society is necessarily Anarchistic; an Anarchistic society is not necessarily ideal. — EDITOR LIBERTY.]

No Place for a Promise.

A *Promise*, according to the common acceptation of the term, is a *binding* declaration made by one person to another to do, or not to do, a certain act in some *future* time. According to this definition, there can, I think, be no place for a Promise in a *harmonious, progressive* world. Promises and Progress are incompatible, unless all the parties are, at all times, as free to break them as they were to make them; and this admission eliminates the binding element, and, therefore, destroys the popular meaning of a promise.

In a progressive world we know more to-morrow than we know to-day. Also harmony implies absence of external coercion; for, all coercion being social discord, a promise that appears *just* and feels agreeable, when measured with to-day's knowledge, may appear unjust and becomes disagreeable, when measured with the standard of to-morrow's knowledge; and in so far as the fulfillment of a promise becomes disagreeable or impossible, it is an element of discord, and discord is the opposite of harmony. H. OLERICH, JR.

HOLSTEIN, IOWA.

[But it is equally true, my good friend, that the non-fulfillment of a promise is disagreeable to the promisee, and in so far is an element of discord, and discord is the opposite of harmony. You need not look for harmony until people are disposed to be harmonious. But justice, or a close approximation thereto, can be secured even from ill-disposed people. I have no doubt of the right of any man to whom, for a consideration, a promise has been made, to insist, even by force, upon the fulfillment of that promise, provided the promise be not one whose fulfillment would invade third parties. And if the promisee has a right to use force himself for such a purpose, he has a right to secure such cooperative force from others as they are willing to extend. These others, in turn, have a right to decide what sort of promises, if any, they will help him to enforce. When it comes to the determination of this point, the question is one of policy solely; and very likely it will be found that the best way to secure the fulfillment of promises is to have it understood in advance that the fulfillment is not to be enforced. But as a matter of justice and liberty, it must always be remembered that a promise is a two-sided affair. And in our anxiety to leave the promisor his liberty, we must not forget the *superior* right of the promisee. I say superior, because the man who fulfils a promise, however unjust the contract, acts voluntarily, whereas the man who has received a promise is defrauded by its non-fulfillment, invaded, deprived of a portion of his liberty against his will. — EDITOR LIBERTY.]

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Changed His Mind.

To the Editor of Liberty:

Some time ago I wrote you to discontinue Liberty, but you sent the first five numbers of Volume IX, and they were worth the cost of a whole volume to me. I profited greatly by the articles on money and especially Anarchism and the Democrats contrasted; so that since then I have changed my mind and think I must have Liberty. Please continue me on your subscription list, and forward back numbers from No. 5.

Please add my name to the subscription list for one copy of your proposed book. Yours respectfully,

JOHN G. PALMER.

UPTON, PA., OCTOBER 24, 1892.

Labor's Fancied Victory.

For once I find myself in sympathy with capital. If those who are familiar with my naturally perverse and eccentric disposition were to infer that the case thus enlisting my sympathy must be one in which sympathy with labor is almost universal, they would not be far wrong. In no strike that I know of have the workmen been more generally admitted to be in the right than in the strike of the Carmaux miners in France; yet seldom have I known a strike in which they were more clearly in the wrong. Being wrong, they have found it easy to win; had they been right, they probably would have lost.

Their case is this,—a very simple one: the miners, forming the bulk of the population of Carmaux, elected one of their number mayor of the town; the mayor's municipal duties required so much of his time that he could do but little work in the mine; his services as a miner becoming thus unsatisfactory, the mining company discharged him; the miners, though admitting that the mayor worked in the mine but two or three hours a day, claimed that the company was bound to continue him in its employ, and they struck against what they described as *a blow at the sacred right of universal suffrage*. If this description were accurate, still it would not justify the strike in my eyes, for I know nothing less worth defending than universal suffrage; but were I the devoutest worshipper of the ballot, I could see no blow at it in the action of the Carmaux corporation, it never having been a part of the theory of representative government that corporations instead of the people should pay the salaries of public officials. For, if the owners of the Carmaux mines had consented to pay wages to a miner who was not working in the mine but was performing the functions of mayor, they would virtually have been paying the mayor's salary. But when the corporation, as a solution of the difficulty, proposed, while insisting upon the right to discharge the miner, to take upon itself the permanent burden of paying outright the mayor's salary, all France, failing to perceive the satire of the offer, rose in a howl of indignation against the impropriety of this franker form of the very thing which the Carmaux miners, backed by all France, were in substance demanding. Even the leading members of the Extreme Left joined in enthusiastic adherence to this novel republican proposition that the freedom of the ballot is assailed when private interests refuse to accept as pensioners the persons elected by ballot to perform public functions. Sentiment was aroused to such a pitch that at last the corporation, to avoid more serious consequences and knowing that it could well afford to humor the foolish workmen and the foolish populace by granting this paltry demand, consented to accept the prime minister of France as arbitrator, who in that capacity decided that the mayor of Carmaux should be reinstated in the employ of the mining company.

And now the sacred right of universal suffrage is vindicated, and the Radicals and Socialists of France are flushed with victory. One of the most prominent State Socialists declares that this triumph has advanced the social revolution by twenty years. As Bebel, the German Socialist, said, before the occurrence of the Carmaux strike, that this revolution would be an accomplished fact ten years hence, it requires but a simple mathematical calculation to show that this strike achieved the revolution ten years ago. These absurd people forget that, if the miners of Carmaux had struck for higher wages, they probably would have lost the strike; that if they had asked for bread, they would have been given a stone, and that their demand has been met solely because it was for a glittering bauble.

T.

The Irreparable.

A Comedy in One Act.

[Translated from the French of CHARLES ESQUIER-SAMARY by Benj. R. Tucker.]

CAST.—MADAME LAFOREST, aged forty; ANDRÉE, aged eighteen; GEORGES VALBERT, aged twenty-seven.

SCENE.—A room in a rather ordinary house at Montmartre, near the Church of the Sacred Heart. The windows, half open, command a view of Montmartre Hill, the Sacred Heart, and the Moulin de la Galette. The twilight imparts a violet tinge to everything. In the distance the setting sun sheds a few reddish gleams. The curtain rises on an empty stage. Church bells are heard. Madame Laforest enters hurriedly. She falls into a chair, exclaiming: "Oh! mon Dieu! mon Dieu!"

SCENE I.

MADAME LAFOREST.—Ah! mon Dieu! mon Dieu! (*She takes off her hat; then she listens to the church bells. She disappears for a moment in the adjoining room, and comes back with a small jacket. She takes from its pocket several letters, which she scarcely looks at; finally she comes to one which she reads a long time. Then she takes from the same pocket a box containing a bracelet, and a moment later lays all these things upon a table.*) Well, God always places the cure beside the ill. What he does is well done. (*The bells have stopped ringing.*)

SCENE II.

(Andrée enters softly, with a tired air; she takes off her hat and lays it down in a corner.)

MME. L., *perceiving her.*—Ah! there you are!

ANDRÉE.—Yes.

MME. L.—Where have you been?

A.—You know very well, Mamma; I have just . .

MME. L.—You lie!

A., *embarrassed.*—I?

MME. L.—You have just been at Valbert's.

A.—But . . . .

MME. L.—I followed you.

A., *hiding her face in her hands.*—Oh!

(A pause.)

MME. L., *in a low voice.*—You have no shame! Ah! if I had known, when you came into the world, that you would begin in this way, I would have strangled you, do you hear? So you did not think of your family, which you were going to disgrace? Of me, me who love you, me your mother? (*Growing tender.*) To think that you, whom I held in my arms, so little . . . . . Ah!

A.—You are right, Mamma. Punish me, beat me . . . . I deserve it.

MME. L.—You are a heartless girl! Is this the way you show your gratitude for the trouble that I have taken on your account? I have sweat blood and water to bring you up. We are poor: I sent you to school. You have received as good an education as the daughters of the rich,—yes, better. I have toiled to give you true ideas of life. Six months ago, when you were but seventeen, I found you a good place, almost a position. To succeed you had only to give yourself up to the current into which I had thrown you. Do I tell the truth? Answer me!

A.—It is true.

MME. L.—Well, I hoped that your good conduct would reward me for all these sacrifices. To reap the fruit of one's toil is the least that one can expect, is it not? Now you, careless of our honor, upset in a day the entire scaffolding of my projects and plunge me into the greatest disappointment that a mother can experience, by silly conduct without profit or advantage, with an ordinary actor at your theatre!!!

A.—Such is life!

MME. L.—How long has this been going on?

A.—Four months.

MME. L.—And I did not see it until today! Now I understand why he comes here to see you so often. I could not suspect anything. He had such a mild way! Anybody would have been deceived. Ah! if I had him! . . . . But how could this have happened to a sensible girl like you?

A.—I don't know? . . . . One loves. . . . . There are moments when one loses reason. . . . . One falls powerless. One can no longer resist . . .

MME. L.—That nature should speak, why, that is not your fault. But you might have made a better choice. There were enough who were paying you attention,—the manager and swell gentlemen, counts, viscounts, nobles! I have often said to you: "My daughter, if you do not feel yourself strong enough to

walk erect, and if you must do silly things, try to do them intelligently." Don't you remember?

A. — Yes. But I did not like those old men.

MME. L. — And then, it is always the same thing. The experience of others goes for nothing. An actor . . . . . you have no idea what that means. . . . . What will Madame Léa Duxis say when she hears of it?

A. — What's that to you?

MME. L. — It was through her that you got upon the stage; do not forget it. She might deprive you of her protection.

A. — She need not be so severe. Little she embarrasses herself . . . . she?

MME. L. — Yes. She conducts herself very well. She is very virtuous.

A. — Oh! dear! dear! (*Rolling up her eyes.*) Very virtuous! She has a new lover every night.

MME. L. — It is for her mother's sake! She has succeeded in achieving a very honorable position. She has horses and carriages. Consequently everybody respects her. Ah! she would not have done what you have done.

A. — She sells herself; I give myself. I do not think that worse.

MME. L. — But, you little stupid, what profit do you get out of it?

A. — I love!

MME. L. — You are crazy! She is crazy! She is completely crazy! Come, let us talk no more about it. It turns my blood. Let us pass to something else. Have you seen this letter?

A. — Show it to me. (*She reads the letter.*)

MME. L. — What is it?

A. — Always the same! . . . . This nuisance who has been pestering me so long.

MME. L. — Count Ogier de Lancre?

A. — Yes; yesterday he sent this bracelet to me at the theatre.

MME. L. — Well, here is something worth talking about. What does he write?

A. — He asks to visit me at my home today. How stupid men are!

MME. L. — After what you have done, you must know what remains for you to do.

A., *rolling up her eyes.* — But I tell you I love Valbert! Don't you understand, then?

MME. L. — Ah! this is really too much. And all this for a penniless fellow who laughs at you! He will make you a child and then drop you.

A., *sadly.* — You are utterly mistaken regarding Valbert. He loves me with the truest, deepest, sincerest love; and if what you say were to happen, he would be incapable of such cowardice.

MME. L. — So you think he would marry you? Well, what if he did? A fine leg that would give you! Madame Valbert! the wife of an actor!

A. — Well, why not? An actor . . . . an actor is a man like another . . . . and often better than another.

MME. L. — Ah! my poor child, you entertain illusions, because you are only eighteen. When you have been a little maltreated by life, you will know men and you will see that they are all alike, — all rascals. The best are those who have money, for they are at least good for something.

A. — Money! Money! Then there is only that in life!

MME. L. — You speak of it very indifferently. Do you think that one can live on air? It is easy to see that nothing costs you anything! It is I who pay. But your mother, little you care for her; she comes last.

A. — Oh! Mamma! you know very well that I love you first of all.

MME. L. — If you love me, you ought to prove it. For eighteen years I have supported you; I am old, I am tired. I am gradually going from you. Soon I shall be helpless. It seems to me that it is your turn now, that you should earn your mother's living. It is very natural, what I ask of you.

A. — Be it so. But anything rather than that!

MME. L. — What will you do?

A. — I will work.

MME. L. — At what?

A. — At what, at what . . . .

MME. L. — At your theatre? Ah! yes, think of it! eighty francs a month! How do you expect us to live on that? You will go out to work by the day, at two francs and a half a day? Then what? You see how foolishly you talk, my poor girl! You understand that I do not wish to allow you to do silly things without giving you warning. Listen to me; I speak to you as a mother. On the one hand you are offered a superb situation; you will be as rich as Madame Léa Duxis; you will be respected, esteemed by everybody, and approved by me. On the other you will drag along in poverty (for I say nothing of myself), and you will die of hunger with your actor. Choose!

A. — Well?

MME. L. — Well?

A. — Well! no! That is a base morality! What! we are two young people made to love, and we are to be blamed for all that is most beautiful and natural! Whereas, if I sell myself to old men, everybody will praise and approve me? What you tell me is not true. It would be too unjust and too revolting! If it were true, if life were like that, I would sooner drown myself at once. Ah! other women do it, possibly! But it fills me with disgust. I love you well, and I would like to see you happy, but I will not sell my body! I will not!! I will not!!! I love! I love! I love!

MME. L. — So that is the tone you take with me! Well, tomorrow I take you from the theatre and put you to work in a dry-goods store in some provincial city. With such sentiments you will never get anywhere, do you understand? You will remain a goose all your life long!

(She goes out, slamming the door.)

SCENE III.

(Left alone, Andrée tears up the count's letter and throws it into the fire; then goes to the window to see if her mother has gone out. Valbert enters behind her and kisses her on the neck.

VALBERT. — So, this is the way you turn your back on your comrades?

A. — Oh, how you frightened me! What brings you here?

V. — After leaving you in the street below, I remained in front of your door to watch. I saw your mother go out; then I came up. I wanted to see you once more. I can no longer remain a moment without you. What an afternoon, eh? This is better than rehearsing. . . . . But what is the matter with you?

A. — My dear, you risk nothing in coming here. Mamma knows all.

V. — What?

A. — Yes. I told her that I was going to rehearsal. She suspected something. She followed me. She saw me enter your house. In short, I have confessed.

V. — The devil you say!

A. — Ah! if you had witnessed this scene.

V. — Did she beat you?

A. — Had she done so, it would not have been much worse.

V. — Ah! I little expected this.

A. — Life here will be a hell. You know, I am no longer a good girl. She would want me to profit thereby, and I do not wish to because of you.

V. — You are very nice.

A. — No! I love you. That's all. I am mad. I know not what you have done to me to make me love you so. It is astonishing.

V. — It is very natural.

A. — Think what she said to me about you: that you made me lose superb positions; that you laugh at me . . . . and then a heap of other things which I will not repeat. There is no truth in these things, is there?

V. — Why, no, my darling, you know it very well. Only you did wrong to confess that it was I.

A. — What would you have had me say?

V. — In such cases one does not confess. One never should confess. You might compromise me and injure my career.

A. — I ask your pardon. You are angry?

V. — No, but . . . .

A. — You love me?

V. — Certainly.

A. — How much do you love me?

V. — I adore you.

A. — Ah! I know it well. I feel it. And I love you so much! It is impossible that you should not love me a tiny little bit. And then, I am not bad-looking. Everybody tells me so. I have pretty eyes, pretty hair. You have not such an ugly little wife.

V., *anxiously.* — Say, suppose your mother should come back?

A. — Oh, there's no danger! She must have gone to tell the story to the wine merchant at the corner. That will take her some time. And then we understand her.

V., *wishing to go.* — All the same, I think it would be more prudent, in order not to compromise myself . . .

A. — Stay! Stay a little longer. It gives me pleasure to have you here.

V. — Darling!

A. — This is my only happiness, my only consolation. And I shall need it now. My mother will make me very unhappy, with such ideas as she has. I need all my strength for the struggle. But I shall be content to suffer, since it will be for you.

V. — I understand your sacrifice, and love you all the more for it. There is no one else like you, do you know? You are an angel.

A. — What do you think I dream of sometimes?

V. — What?

A. — Of remaining in your arms forever; of looking at you, feeling you near me. Would you like it?

V. — Would I like it!

A. — Ah! how good it would be. How happy we should be. You see, I was not born for a life of dissipation. It is repugnant to me. I should like to be a good little housekeeper, and live tranquilly, calmly, honestly; with my darling Georges; my little husband. Are you not my little husband?

V. — Why, yes. Why, yes.

A. — You have taken me entirely. Body and soul, I am yours. Never could I be another's. The very idea of it send a shiver down my back.

V. — Ah! I understand that.

A. — And you, could you say to another woman the same nice things that you say to me?

V. — Never!

A. — You are too good, are you not? Too honest, too sincere!

V. — Certainly. Certainly.

A. — It will last forever, will it not?

V. — Forever.

A. — And later, when we are old, we will have babies.

V., *laughing.* — Oh, indeed!

A. — Perhaps you would not like to have your darling wife present you a pretty boy resembling you, a little Georges? He would have black eyes like you, and light hair like me. I would dress him all in white. He would be pretty.

V. — What a child you are!

A. — Would that please you, eh?

V. — That depends.

A. — Answer me yes or no, I pray you.

V. — Yes, then, little goose.

A. — Then . . . .

V. — Then what?

A. — Then, my darling, rejoice.

V. — What? Do you mean that . . . .

(She nods assent, blushing and lowering her eyes.)

V., *between his teeth.* — In the devil's name!

A. — Well, you do not leap upon your little Andrée's neck?

V. — Why, yes! Why, yes!

A. — I thought this news would please you.

V. — It does please me; it pleases me greatly. Only, what do you expect? You announce it to me so abruptly. Such a thing is surprising . . . . when one is not expecting it . . . . is not accustomed . . . .

A. — Yes, naturally. But you will be very glad to bring up this baby, who will call you Papa.

V. — Evidently. Only, you understand, it is necessary to look at things a little more seriously. A child . . . . that is very nice . . . . but it is very expensive to bring up . . . . I have not a sou. Great responsibility in the future . . . . it might compromise my career . . . . my situation . . . my family . . . . in short . . . . you understand?

A. — Yes, I understand. (*She begins to cry.*)

V. — What is the matter?

A. — Ah! Mamma was right just now.

V. — Why, no. Why, no. You exaggerate. Come, don't cry. I will look out for this child, you may be sure. We will both look out for it. It is to be hoped that my situation will improve. With the talent that I have . . . . Yours too will improve. You may have luck. Perhaps you will succeed sooner than I. One never knows. Women have resources that men have not. And then, I love you well, you know. So

don't cry. It gives me all the more sorrow because what you have just told me forces me to a very sad decision.

A. — What is it?

V. — This: I am offered a superb engagement, a two years' tour in America. A magnificent salary! Well, see how I love you; at the last moment I was unwilling to sign, because it would separate me from you. That would have been too hard. Only, now, you will see yourself that with this new responsibility I must have money. Whatever it may cost us both, something tells me that my duty is to accept for your sake, for his. Oh! don't cry like that. I do not start for two months yet. Listen, if it gives you too much pain, I will not go, there! I place my future in your hands. I will do as you like. I cannot say better than that. You can ruin my career, or make it brilliant and superb. All depends on you. Decide.

A. — Sign! Go. Start.

V. — Ah! how nice you are (*he kisses her*), and then you know . . . . do not grieve. I will send you money . . . . for the little one. Besides, there is much time yet. But count on me. It is agreed, eh? If so, I'm off. It is late; I have just time to dine and get to the theatre. Moreover, your mother may come in. Adieu, my adorable darling! I love to see you reasonable. Adieu!

A. — Shall I see you tonight, after the first . . .

V. — Yes; come up to my dressing-room, if you like. Good night! I'm off. (*Exit.*)

SCENE IV.

A., *alone.* — Ah! Mamma was really right. All the same, it gives me much pain. (*She bursts into tears.*) My destiny then was irreparably traced. Poor little one!

SCENE V.

MME. L., *entering.* — Well, Andrée, have you reflected?

A. — Upon what?

MME. L. — Count Ogier de Lancre is here. What shall I tell him?

A. — Tell him to come in.

(The church bells ring as the curtain falls.)

The Rise and Fall of Creede.

[New York Sun.]

A thousand burdened burros filled
The narrow, winding, wriggling trail.
A hundred settlers came to build,
Each day, new houses in the vale.
A hundred gamblers came to feed
On these same settlers — this was Creede.

Slanting Annie, Gambler Joe,
And Robert Ford; old Olio —
Or Soapy Smith, as he was known —
Ran games peculiarly their own,
And everything was open wide,
And men drank absinthe on the side.

And now the Faro Bank is closed,
And Mr. Faro's gone away
To seek new fields, it is supposed,
More verdant fields. The gamblers say
The man who worked the shell and ball
Has gone back to the Capitol.

The winter winds blow bleak and chill,
The quaking, quivering aspen waves
About the summit of the hill —
Above the unrecorded graves,
Where halt, abandoned burros feed
And coyotes call — and this is Creede.

Lone graves! whose headboards bear no name;
Whose silent owners lived like brutes,
And died as doggedly, but game;
And most of them died in their boots.
We mind among the unwrit names
The man who murdered Jesse James.

We saw him murdered, saw him fall,
And saw his mad assassin gloat
Above him; heard his moans and all,
And saw the shot holes in his throat.
And men moved on and gave no heed
To life or death — and this is Creede.

Slanting Annie, Gambler Joe,
And Missouri Bob are sleeping there,
But slippery, sly old Olio,
Who seems to shun the golden stair,
Has turned his time to loftier tricks —
He's doing Denver politics.

Cy Warman.

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